rejection was maintained from a previous Office Action. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

The cited references do not teach the testing of device driver hardening. As noted in the previous Office Action response, Tavallelli teaches a system management module for a host server system, while Splett teaches a bus error injection circuit, which generates bus errors to test proper operation and recovery in a system of module interconnected by a synchronous digital bus. In contrast, Applicant teaches a mechanism and a method for test device driver hardening. As defined in *The New IEEE Standard Dictionary of Electrical and Electronics Terms*, Fifth Edition, a device driver is "the software that translates device-independent commands into device-specific commands". Device driver hardening is discussed in Applicant's specification.

Applicant submits that neither reference teaches, discloses, or suggests the testing of device drivers and further, neither reference teaches, discloses, or suggests the testing of device driver hardening. Applicant further submits that neither reference includes any discussion of device drivers, the testing of device drivers, device driver hardening and the testing thereof. Applicant can find no mention in either reference of device drivers, the testing of device drivers, device driver hardening, or the testing of device driver hardening. Applicant believes the testing cited in the prior art assumes that the device drivers are operating correctly. Applicant further submits that there is no consideration to device driver hardening by either Tavallelli or Splett, as Applicant can find no mention of device drivers or device driver hardening in either of these references.

Independent claim 1 recites:

> A test mechanism for **testing device driver hardening**, the test mechanism comprising an intercept mechanism for intercepting device access calls **from a device driver under test** and an interface for configuring the intercept mechanism for faults to be injected in response to the device access calls according to a determined test pattern. (Emphasis added)

Independent claim 17 recites:

A computer program product on a carrier medium, the computer program product comprising an intercept mechanism for intercepting device access calls from **a device driver under test** and an interface for configuring the intercept mechanism for faults to be injected in response to the device access calls according to a determined desired test pattern. (Emphasis added)

Independent claim 18 recites:

A test mechanism for **testing device driver hardening**, the test mechanism comprising a means for intercepting device driver access calls from a **device driver under test** and means for injecting a fault in a response to the device access call according to a determined test pattern. (Emphasis added)

Independent claim 19 recites:

A computer comprising a device driver for accessing an I/O device and a test mechanism for **testing device driver hardening**, the test mechanism comprising an intercept mechanism for intercepting device access calls from a **device driver under test** and an interface for configuring the intercept mechanism for faults to be injected in response to the device access calls according to a determined test pattern. (Emphasis added)

Independent claim 20 recites:

A method of **testing the hardening of a device driver**, the method comprising intercepting device driver access calls from the device driver and **injecting a fault in a device driver access** according to a desired test pattern. (Emphasis added)

Neither Tavellelli nor Splett, taken singly or in combination, teach or suggest the testing of device driver hardening, nor do either of these references, taken singly or in combination, teach or suggest a device driver under test. Neither Tavallelli nor Splett, taken singly or in combination, teach the injecting of a fault in a device driver access. Applicant further submits that Splett provides no teaching, suggestion, or motivation to modify Tavallelli in order teach the testing of device driver hardening, a device driver under test, or the injecting of a fault in a device driver access.

In light of the foregoing remarks, Applicants submit that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, and an early notice to that effect is earnestly solicited. If a phone interview would speed allowance of any pending claims, such is requested at the Examiner's convenience.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any fees which may be required, or credit any overpayment, to Conley, Rose & Tayon, P.C. Deposit Account No. 501505\5181-15900\BNK.

Respectfully submitted,

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